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**CITY OF BELEN  
PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION MEETING  
MINUTES  
MAY 28, 2019**

Chairman Steve Ethridge called the regular meeting of the Belen Planning and Zoning Commission meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

**PRESENT:** Chairman Steve Ethridge  
Commissioner Jim Lardner  
Vice Chair Pete Armstrong

**ABSENT:** Commissioner Claudine Montano

**CITY STAFF:** Steven Tomita, Planning & Economic Development Director

**APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

Commissioner Jim Lardner moved to approve the Agenda of May 28, 2019.

Vice Chair Pete Armstrong seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

Commissioner Jim Lardner moved to table the minutes of April 29 and May 13, 2019 until next meeting or when they are available.

Vice Chair Pete Armstrong seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

**PUBLIC COMMENT – 3 MINUTE PRESENTATIONS**

There was none.

Jim Lardner informed the Commission said that he hopes that the Commission had a few good meetings due to the fact that he was out of town and unable to attend.

Pete Armstrong informed the Commission that his grandson played in the state baseball tournament for El Dorado Schools. He also graduated from El Dorado. His youngest son got married.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Master Plan**

Steven Tomita informed the Commission that they had received permission from the Council to submit for a grant with the New Mexico Finance Authority for the Master Plan. The City also will be submitting for a \$50,000 grant for an update to the Strategic Growth Plan.

Vice Chair Pete Armstrong asked if that was going to be enough money.

Steven Tomita said he thinks so because the Planning & Zoning Commission is providing a lot of the information that is going to be needed.

Commissioner Jim Lardner asked what the long term Master Plan looked like. 5 Years, 10 Years?

Steven Tomita said up to 20 years. He asked the Commission if they had reviewed the sections assigned to them at the last meeting.

Chairman Steve Ethridge said that the Strategic growth areas seem to be the Exists into Belen.

Steven Tomita said that there is the Strategic Implementation Plan, which is basically saying how to implement the Strategic Growth Plan.

They went over what had been done and where they go from there. They went over who was going to review what Plan so that they could discuss them at the meetings. Steven brought out what Plans the Commission need to review. They were going to go through these plans and incorporate what information could be used into the Master Plan. There was a housing assessment done for the City and that also needs to be incorporated into the plan. There is a lot of information out there, some of it dates back to 2004 and some of this information needs to also be incorporated into the Plan. These plans can be referenced in the Master Plan. Some of these things can get pretty detailed.

Vice Chair Pete Armstrong said that the Commission does not meet often enough to be doing the type of work we need to do.

Steven Tomita said no. That is why we need a consultant to help.

Vice Chair Pete Armstrong asked if the \$50,000 would cover it.

Steven Tomita said that it should due to the fact that we have put a lot of work into it already. The key to a long range Master Plan is to contain the generalities of the plan on where we are heading with housing, land use, economic development, etc.

Chairman Steve Ethridge asked if all communities need these types of documents to get any kind of funding for projects.

Steven Tomita said yes. The City also needs to annex the Industrial Park area in Rio Communities.

Chairman Steve Ethridge said the way he looks at it is we do not need to eat an elephant. It does not look very appetizing but if we need to do it, it needs to be done a little at a time. It is going to be a long process. He likes the idea of reading assignments for the Commission.

Steven Tomita spoke of the meeting he had with an investor and some of the things that he said about the Belen area. One of the main things that was said was that the citizens of Belen do not have a good opinion. It was all negative attitudes. Education is another thing that was brought up. We need to have some excellence in our schools. He showed them a flyer that he has come up with, presenting what Belen has to offer. It has all the info that is needed to entice developers to come to Belen. We also need more housing here. School training programs need to be added to the schools. Retail follows housing. Valencia County and all of the communities within the county are still doing well, as far as growth goes.

Rio Rancho and its growth were discussed. The five growth areas of Belen were brought up. Tractor supply was discussed. They are planning on building their own building now. They are looking at the area of the I-25 Bypass.

Commissioner Jim Lardner asked how long it would be, if his grant was approved, before we could get a consultant on board.

Steven Tomita said that it would be sometime around the end of August. The finished product would depend on whether that consultant was familiar with our other documents and information. He spoke about the grants he will be applying for and what they can help us with. The whole process would take approximately 1 year to complete the Master Plan. He informed the Commission that he is also going to be asking approval from the Council, to apply for a grant that will finish off the designs of the North Interchange. We can then apply for different funding to help get that interchange done. Once the interchange is done there is going to be a big economic impact in the area and in Belen.

Chairman Steve Ethridge asked about the development of the Rancho Cielo area since the inter-model is going in Los Lunas.

Steven Tomita said that the BNSF Railway was originally interested in an area in Rancho Cielo but decided against it because of the amount of rail traffic on the main line. They then decided to locate it in Los Lunas. He talked about Affordable Housing and how that affects the Master Plan. He suggested that the Commission read through the Affordable Housing Plan to discuss what should be included in the Master Plan.

### **INFORMATIONAL ITEMS**

#### **Communication from the Commission and Staff.**

Steven Tomita said that Better Call Saul will be filming in a few different locations in Belen. There are a few other areas here that will be used for filming other films. There are also film scouts looking at several locations throughout Belen.

They spoke about the River Park and who might be interested in acquiring the park.

**ADJOURN**


There being no further business to come before the City of Belen Planning & Zoning Commission, Vice Chair Pete Armstrong moved to adjourn.

Commissioner Jim Lardner seconded the motion

Motion carried.

The regular meeting of the City of Belen Planning & Zoning Commission adjourned at 7:09 PM.

  
Chairman Steve Ethridge

ATTEST:   
Steven Tomita, Planning & Economic Development Director